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LETTER DATED 6 JANUARY 1999 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I.
OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF LIBERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to present you my compliments and to forward herewith the attached letter addressed to you by Charles Ghankay Taylor, President of the Republic of Liberia, concerning the situation in Sierra Leone.

I would be grateful were you to circulate the text of this letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Famatta R. OSODE
Chargé d'affaires, a.i.

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Annex

Letter dated 6 January 1999 from the President of Liberia addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am pleased to present my compliments and to refer to recent accusations made against the Government of Liberia by the Force Commander of the Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the Foreign Minister of Sierra Leone at the recent meeting of the ECOWAS Committee of Five on Sierra Leone, held in Abidjan, on 28 December 1998. The Government of Liberia was accused of supporting the rebellion in Sierra Leone.

The Government of Liberia wishes to inform the Security Council that it is in no manner or form supporting the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council/Revolutionary United Front (AFRC/RUF) forces in Sierra Leone, and that it continues to abide by all existing Security Council resolutions and embargoes. The failure and inability of those parties accusing Liberia to produce any evidence or proof is sufficient grounds to warrant such accusations as not credible and speculative. The Government of Liberia calls upon the Security Council to investigate freely those malicious allegations, which are purely intended to cover up the failure of the use of force as a policy to end the civil war in Sierra Leone.

It is important to note that, while accusing Liberia of supporting the rebels, both ECOMOG and the Government of Sierra Leone have also accused "white mercenaries" and certain senior military officers of the Sierra Leonean army in Freetown. In fact, there has been no consistency with regard to whom is being accused. Political opposition leaders living in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America and certain non-Sierra Leonean businessmen deported by the Kabbah Government have also been accused. What is quite interesting is the fact that Sierra Leone is not only bordered by Liberia, but by two countries. The other country has a border three times the length of the border with Liberia. The strength of the rebels and their activities have been confirmed to be concentrated in the northern region, which is of geographical proximity not to Liberia, but to the other neighbor. The eastern region, which is of geographical proximity to Liberia, is calm. The accused "white mercenaries" have been identified as Ukrainians; the only presence of Ukrainians in the subregion is to be found in the other neighboring country. The lack of proof against Liberia could very well be due to the fact that the accusing fingers are being pointed at the wrong person, and that other possible sources of support for the rebels have been ruled out. Circumstantial evidence and the process of elimination are not tenable grounds upon which to make such grave accusations against a State Member of the United Nations. We believe that the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone should conduct its own independent analysis of the situation, and that the international community should not be compelled to make decisions based on speculation.

The Government of Liberia renews its request to the United Nations to put into place a mechanism to ensure transparency in the monitoring of its border by the United Nations. Our commitment to the restoration of peace and security in Sierra Leone is evidenced by the following measures undertaken with regard to

he situation in Sierra Leone: (a) the Government has publicly and unequivocally stated its support for the elected Government of President Kabbah and condemned he atrocities perpetuated against the people of Sierra Leone; (b) the Government has requested, through the Secretary-General of the United Nations, hat the United Nations deploy observers at the Liberian-Sierra Leonean border o monitor the implementation of the United Nations embargo; (c) the Government as requested ECOWAS, through its Executive Secretary, to deploy an observer nit of ECOMOG at the Liberian-Sierra Leonean border; (d) the Government has ffered to conduct joint border security activities with the Government of ierra Leone; (e) the Government has undertaken to maintain regular high-level ontacts with the Government of Sierra Leone through the exchange of envoys; (f) he Government has voted for and supported sanctions and embargoes against FRC/RUF, and all ECOWAS initiatives for Sierra Leone; (g) the Government has ffered to accept undercover security personnel from Sierra Leone to operate in iberia in assisting to ensure that no activities against Sierra Leone are arried out; (h) the Government, through its President, has proposed an nitiative to assist the peace process in Sierra Leone; and (i) the Government ontinues to provide safe refuge for tens of thousands of Sierra Leonean efugees in Liberia.

We believe that the United Nations can still play an important role in the esolution of the conflict in Sierra Leone. Since October 1997, the Government f Liberia has called on the United Nations to deploy observers on the Liberian-ierra Leonean border. Again in May 1998, we reiterated this appeal to the ecretary-General. In paragraphs 78 and 79 of his fifth progress report on ierra Leone (S/1998/486), the Secretary-General indicated his intention to iscuss the matter further with the Government with a view to making appropriate ecommendations to the Security Council for the deployment of observers on the order. To date, nothing has been done by the Security Council to this effect.

There can be no doubt that the Government of Sierra Leone takes offence at he suggestion of the Government of Liberia that dialogue be pursued as a means o end their civil war. From our experience in Liberia, only a negotiated ettlement, and not a military victory, will bring sustainable peace to Sierra eone. The aversion of the Government of President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah to ialogue is a clear indication of a lack of political will to pursue a egotiated settlement. The attendant failure of the Government of Sierra Leone o achieve a military conquest has occasioned these unfounded allegations gainst the Government of Liberia. In all candor, we should be concentrating ur efforts, directing our energies and committing our resources to the ttainment of a ceasefire and the re-establishment of dialogue, rather than ngaging in reckless accusations.

Permit me to reassure the members of the Security Council of the continued illingness of the Government of Liberia to play a positive and meaningful role n helping to bring peace to Sierra Leone and to enforce all resolutions of the nited Nations.

(Signed) Charles Ghankay TAYLOR